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OBITUARY OF DR. PRICHARD.

BY DR. HODGKIN, M.D.

READ BEFORE THE ETHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY, 28 FEBRUARY 1849.

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ALTHOUGH from the earliest periods the pages of history have been chiefly occupied by the records of the rise and fall and collisions of nations, yet she has not failed, together with more ancient tradition, to preserve the memory of superior individuals; and the most remarkable and exciting public events have not placed in the shade the light of those individuals who have been coeval with them. This does not merely apply to those historic characters, who, from the important part which they have taken in public affairs, have been handed down to posterity as the benefactors or the destroyers of mankind on an extended scale. The poet, the historian, and the philosopher, have shared with the lawgiver and the conqueror in this enduring celebrity; and it is the characteristic of the intensity of their unborrowed light, that it is uninfluenced by any appreciable distance of time. It may seem strange that I should thus introduce a notice of our late distinguished President by an allusion to those worthies of antiquity, whose names, though unconnected with any great exploits, have been preserved in fame solely by the enduring character of virtue and talent. But it has forced itself upon my reflection, that the year 1848, which must ever be remarkable amongst the years of the nineteenth century for the savage atrocities which have signalized those wars of races which have disgraced it, will also be remembered as the year which closed the life of the greatest writer who has treated of the science of Ethnology, and investigated and classified the nations and kindreds and tongues of voice-varying men.

James Cowles Prichard, the eldest son of Thomas and Mary Prichard, was born on the 11th of 2<sup>mo</sup> (Feb.) 1786, at Ross, in Herefordshire, where his family had resided for several generations. His parents were members of the Society of Friends, and in its principles he was himself educated. The name of Dr. Prichard may therefore be adduced with those of Fothergill, Willan, Lettsom, Sims, Birkbeck, and the very distinguished Thomas Young, in his own profession, and with those of

Dalton, Goff, Howard, Allen, and of many others out of it, in refutation of the opinion—that the principles of this Society are unfriendly to the cultivation of the intellectual faculties. Thomas Prichard (the Doctor's father) was educated at a School at Burford, in Oxfordshire, which was kept by Thomas Huntley, who enjoyed considerable reputation as a classical teacher amongst the Society of Friends; and who, if he was not a profound scholar, had considerable facility in Latin composition, and possessed the faculty of imparting a taste for study to his youthful pupils. Luke Howard and Bracy Clark, both distinguished for laborious research on very different subjects, were educated by him.

From an extended memoir of Thomas Prichard's life, written by Dr. Prichard, and which I have had the opportunity of consulting, it appears that Thomas Prichard left school with only an imperfect acquaintance with the classics, but with a strong taste for study, which he pursued privately, not merely for the improvement of his knowledge of the ancient authors, but also for the acquisition of French, German, and Hebrew. He married when he was about twenty years of age, and whilst yet a young man, was left a widower with four children, to the care and education of whom he most sedulously devoted the time which could be spared from the mercantile pursuits in which he was engaged. I am informed by one who knew him well, that he was a man of a refined and cultivated mind, great poetical imagination, of fervent piety, and of a depth of feeling and affection that could only be appreciated by those who had the privilege of intercourse with him. He lived to see the fruits of his early training, and to bless his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

James C. Prichard, the object of this notice, was never sent to school, but his ardent thirst for knowledge kept him closely applied to his books. He was taught Latin and arithmetic by an Irishman named John Barnes, French by an emigrant named De Rosemond, and Italian and Spanish by Mordenti, who called himself a Roman. It formed a part of his father's plan early to introduce a practical acquaintance with French as well as English, and for this purpose it was his practice to devote most evenings to reading English from a French book, often from Rollin's history. He then required his children to give in

French what he had said in English. Familiarity with French, and a taste for history, were thus imparted together.

The taste for those researches for which our late President was so justly distinguished exhibited itself at this early period of his life. He was fond of tracing the genealogies of kings of the most remote historic times; and as his father was then residing in Bristol, he employed himself in finding out and examining the specimens of the natives of different countries who were to be met with amongst the shipping of that port; and he would occasionally bring a foreigner to his father's house. His familiarity with Spanish and the Modern Greek was in part attributable to this cause.

On Thomas Prichard's retiring from business, he left Bristol, and returned to Ross, where his son James continued his studies under private tutors.

From Ross, James C. Prichard was sent to Bristol, to enter upon the study of medicine. He had made choice of this pursuit, not from any special predilection for medical subjects, but regarding a profession as more favourable than commerce to those studies to which he was devoted, he rather accepted than chose medicine, as the only one which at that time was regarded as accessible to the Members of the Society to which he belonged. He went to Bristol in 1802, where he studied under Thomas Pole, an ingenious American, who was likewise a Member of the Society of Friends, and who had for years been engaged in London in practising and teaching the obstetric art. He was much devoted to collecting and preserving preparations and specimens, and has left a work on the art of making preparations which is still esteemed as one of the best on the subject.

In the summer of 1802 J. C. Prichard was removed to Staines, where he practised pharmacy under Robert Pope and William Tothill, Friends engaged in extensive general practice, the former of whom was subsequently known as Dr. Pope, in frequent professional attendance at Windsor Castle.

A member of William Tothill's family has stated to me, in a letter, that Dr. Prichard applied himself with diligence to the object for which his father brought him to Staines, and that at other intervals he pursued his various studies with great assiduity. He gladly availed himself of the opportunity of acquiring much practical knowledge from William Tothill, and of

profiting by the large experience which a very extensive practice had furnished. He always acknowledged his obligations to this source, which contributed to cement a mutual esteem between the master and the pupil. His conduct in the family was marked by amiability, and this, together with very buoyant spirits, rendered him a very pleasant associate to those near his own age. This notice of the Doctor's early industry and application to study is well worthy of attention. It holds up an example which, like the early years of other great men, should stimulate the youth of future generations to follow the same course, and ever to remember the importance of taking advantage of the seed-time of life, by well directed and assiduous labour, if they have any laudable wish to attain to eminence, or even to escape mediocrity in later years.

From Staines James C. Prichard proceeded to London, and pursued his medical studies at St. Thomas's Hospital, where his late colleague in the Lunacy Commission (Dr. Turner) was at that time engaged as a Lecturer.

He went to Edinburgh in the autumn of 1806; and it was during his residence as a Student in that University that he first embodied his ideas on the varieties of the human race. His friend and fellow-student, Dr. Arnould, of Wallingford, thus speaks of him: "From the year 1807 we were very much together, and from that time, during our stay in Edinburgh, the history of his book is the history of his life, for it was the continual occupation of his mind. In our daily walks it was always uppermost: a shade of complexion—a singularity of physiognomy—a peculiarity of form—would always introduce the one absorbing subject. In the crowd and in solitude it was ever present with him. I well remember when one evening we were wending our way amidst the mountains in the neighbourhood of Loch Katrine, not so much frequented then as it has been since the 'Lady of the Lake' appeared: it was near the going down of the sun, when, amidst the wildest scenery, we saw a Highlander on a distant crag, standing out clear and distinct, and seemingly magnified to a large size, and his huge shadow stretching out towards us. The effect for my friend was magical: fatigue was felt no longer, and he at once resumed all his powers of mind and body, and poured out a most splendid dissertation on the history of the Celtic nations—the dark,

fearful, gloomy, and savage rites of the Druids—and conjured up the horrors we should have endured, if in those earlier times we had been lonely wanderers in that remote district, and beguiled the weariness of the way till we reached our place of rest at night.

“His favourite topic was a frequent subject of discussion in a private debating society called the Azygotic. It consisted of six members, Charles and Patrick Mackenzie, Hampden, Estlin, Prichard, and Arnould. We met at each other’s houses one evening in the week for literary, scientific, and philosophical discussion. On the night of Prichard’s paper, which was the basis of his thesis for his doctor’s degree, we had a very long, animated, and interesting debate.”

I have understood that the young ethnologist maintained a correspondence with his father on the subject of his investigations, and that the good man not only took a lively interest in the inquiry, but expressed his desire that his son would maintain the orthodox side of the question with respect to the unity of our race. Judging from the uniform tenor of Dr. Prichard’s mind, I am induced to believe that to this side his own views were always disposed to incline, although he has collected and stated the arguments on both sides with perfect fairness and impartiality.

It may seem rather paradoxical, yet I cannot withhold the observation, that this bias is more favourable to the attainment of the true solution of the question, than the opposite tendency, and a readiness to admit independence of origin in several distinct pairs. This last assumption, by affording a ready explanation of the several varieties of form, colour, and stature, must tend to damp the ardour of research; whereas the desire to discover the proofs of connection, in spite of these diversities, is like a lantern to our path in the obscurity of night; whilst the objections of opponents, whether urged or anticipated, must ever be ready to recall erring steps, where any deviation is made from the path of truth.

Amongst the names of those with whom Dr. Prichard became acquainted during his stay in Edinburgh, and whose friendship he maintained in after life, I must mention that of Dr. Thomas Hancock, likewise a member of the Society of Friends, and subsequently known as the author of two very

interesting works, the one relating to the instincts of the lower animals, the other, an historical account of the principal epidemics which have been placed on record, with an inquiry into the laws which have appeared to regulate them.\*

Having completed his curriculum, and taken his degree in Edinburgh, Dr. Prichard passed a year at Trinity College, Cambridge; the superior liberality of that University allowing Dissenters the privilege of studying, though not of graduating there. I have not been informed of the Doctor's course of study whilst at Cambridge; but as he was in after life a very fair mathematician, it is more than probable that his readings at Cambridge were chiefly mathematical. It is certain that he must have spent a portion of his time on theology; for it was at this period of his life that, on the ground of conviction, he separated himself from the Society of Friends. I never learned, and it would be foreign to this notice here to discuss the doctrinal points which occasioned this separation; but I cannot forego the pleasure of recording that which I had myself the opportunity of observing, and which was alike characteristic of the excellence of his natural disposition, and of his true Christian charity,—that he retained in after life a most kind and amiable feeling and interest in relation to the Society and its members. The change to which I have just adverted enabled the Doctor, who had joined the communion of the Church of England, to enter as a student in the University of Oxford. He first resided in St. John's, but afterwards transferred himself to Trinity College, of which he was a gentleman commoner. Knowledge, not title, was his object, and he sought no degree from the University.

In 1810 he settled at Bristol as a physician; and continuing his researches on the Physical History of Man, he brought out the first edition of his work on that subject towards the close of the year 1813. The views which he had at that time adopted, and the scope embraced by this work, the extension of which in subsequent editions occupied so large a portion of his attention, and justly procured him universal reputation, cannot be better stated than in the Doctor's own words:—

“The nature and causes of the physical diversities which

\* Whilst these pages have been in the press, Dr. Hancock has died at Lisburn, to which place he had retired.

characterize different races of men, though a curious and interesting subject of inquiry, is one which has rarely engaged the notice of writers of our own country. The few English authors who have treated of it, at least those who have entered into the investigation on physiological grounds, have, for the most part, maintained the opinion, that there exist in mankind several distinct species. A considerable and very respectable class of foreign writers, at the head of whom we reckon Buffon and Blumenbach, have given their suffrages on the contrary side of this question, and have entered more diffusely into the proof of the doctrine they advocate.

“My attention was strongly excited to this inquiry many years ago, by happening to hear the truth of the Mosaic records implicated in it, and denied, on the alleged impossibility of reconciling the history contained in them with the phenomena of nature, and particularly with the diversified characters of the several races of men. The arguments of those who assert that these races constitute distinct species appeared to me at first irresistible, and I found no satisfactory proof in the vague and conjectural reasonings by which the opposite opinion has generally been defended. I was at last convinced that most of the theories current concerning the effects of climate and other modifying causes are in great part hypothetical, and irreconcilable with facts that cannot be disputed.

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“In the course of this essay I have maintained the opinion, that all mankind constitute but one race, or proceed from a single family, but I am far from wishing to interest any religious predilections in favour of my conclusions. On the contrary, I am ready to admit, and shall be glad to believe, if it can be made to appear, that the truth of the Scriptures is not involved in the decision of this question. I have made no reference to the writings of Moses, except with relation to events concerning which the authority of those most ancient records may be received as common historical testimony; being aware that one class of persons would refuse to admit any such appeal, and that others would rather wish to see the points in dispute established on distinct and independent grounds.”

In this work Dr. Prichard set forth the differences of colour, hair, stature, and form, and examined the value of each as an



evidence of difference of race ; and inferred from the occurrence of these and similar differences, where identity of race could not be doubted, that they must not be received as evidences against the unity of our species. He successfully combated the old opinion, that the influence of the sun continued through several generations has produced the blackness of the Negro, and adduced instances in proof of the continuance of black or brown and the white complexion through numerous generations, in almost every latitude and climate. He inquired into the production and permanency of varieties in man and in inferior animals ; examined some of the causes which may tend to produce them ; and following up an idea adopted by John Hunter, that cultivation is a powerful cause of producing variety, and of lowering the intensity of colour in animals and plants, he makes the suggestion, that civilization has been the operative cause which has produced the white varieties of the human species, of which he supposed that the first pair were black. He related many curious facts collected from several parts of the globe in support of this bold and ingenious theory, the announcement of which excited both surprise and interest. Though the Doctor ventured to offer this conjecture, the work was throughout an appeal to fact and evidence : and not satisfied with merely inferring that resemblance in form, colour, language, and habits are proofs of a community of origin amongst the inhabitants of distant islands, he adduced the instances of canoes with their crews having lost their way, and being conveyed by winds or currents to a distance of hundreds of miles across the ocean. The work contains a description of the known varieties of man, in which the author adopted the division proposed by Blumenbach, and exhibited a great amount of research in the number of authors from whom his descriptions were collected. Even at this early period of the author's researches, a large amount of labour and erudition were devoted to the ancient Egyptians and Hindoos.

About thirteen years intervened between the publication of the first and second editions of the Doctor's work ; and as his growing celebrity as a physician had in the meantime raised him to eminence in his profession, it may not be amiss here to make a digression from his history as an ethnologist, in order to speak of him as a medical man, in which character he would

have been distinguished had he written nothing upon ethnology. It has already been stated that Dr. Prichard did not embrace the profession of medicine from any strong and early predilection. But what is of far greater importance to the study of the wide range of subjects which the science of medicine embraces, he brought to it that accurate observation which is the result of habitual exercise; and that aptitude for continued and varied study, which springs from the union of talent with early education, and is the surest preparation for sound professional knowledge, and safe and successful practice. And I may here be allowed to remark, that nothing is more absurd than the vulgar error, that there may be an intuitive knowledge and natural gift which of themselves confer on their possessors a marvellous skill in the healing art. Dr. Prichard applied himself with as much zeal to the practice as he had done to the study of his profession. He established a dispensary. He became physician to some of the principal Medical Institutions of Bristol. He had not only a large practice in his own neighbourhood, but was often called to distant consultations. Notwithstanding the engrossing nature of these occupations, he found time to prepare and deliver lectures on Physiology and Medicine, and wrote an essay on Fever and one on Epilepsy, and subsequently a larger work on Nervous Diseases.

Amongst the patients who came under the Doctor's care in public practice were the inmates of a lunatic asylum; and combining the results of his own observation and experience with that laborious research which he was accustomed to employ on all the subjects to which he directed his attention, he was enabled to produce an excellent treatise on Insanity, which was first published as one of the articles which he contributed to the "Encyclopædia of Practical Medicine."

Notwithstanding his numerous avocations, Dr. Prichard continued his literary and scientific studies; yet many of these had more or less a bearing upon his favourite subject—the history of man. He acquired the German language, in which so many profound works on philology and history are composed; and as an exercise, he prepared and published, in conjunction with his friend W. Tothill, a translation of Müller's General History. He wrote an article on the Mithridates of Adelung.

He continued his researches on Egyptian mythology and history, in which he investigated their relations to those of India. He contributed various articles to reviews and other periodicals, of which I have not been able to obtain a complete list, but the following may be mentioned : A paper on Snowden—three papers on the Mosaic Cosmogony, in Tilloch's Journal—Papers on the Universities—on the Zodiac—on Isis and Osiris—on Fahn and Schlegel.—Articles on Delirium, Hypochondriasis, Somnambulism, Animal Magnetism, Soundness of Mind and Temperament, in the "Cyclopædia of Practical Medicine;" and several chapters on similar subjects in the "Library of Medicine." Also a small volume on Insanity connected with Jurisprudence, and a highly-interesting essay on the Vital Principle.

The study of the Hebrew language was alike congenial to his religious feelings and to his philological taste. An essay on the Song of Deborah, which he wrote for the gratification of his friends, is an interesting piece, in which, though short, the Doctor appears in both characters.

Study was so thoroughly identified with his life, that even the hours which he could spare from social intercourse were made subservient to his literary pursuits, and Greek readings with a few learned friends occupied the time which other men devote to light or frivolous pursuits. A poetical translation of the *Birds of Aristophanes* may be mentioned amongst the fruits of these *horæ subsecivæ*.

In the year 1826 the Doctor published the second edition of his "Researches into the Physical History of Man." In the interval of nearly thirteen years which had elapsed, he had not only collected a great amount of valuable materials, but had brought to bear upon the difficult questions which his subject presents a variety of collateral knowledge for their elucidation, thereby not only enhancing the value of his own researches, but pointing out to future inquirers the path to truth, in which he made such important advances. In the first volume he treated largely on the curious subject of the diffusion of organized beings, both vegetable and animal, entering into a most minute examination of a question which had previously occupied the attention of the great Linnæus, who maintained, that in every species of plants, as well as of animals,

only one pair was originally produced. “Unum individuum ex hermaphroditis et unicum par reliquorum viventium fuisse primulū creatum sana ratio videtur clarissime ostendere.”

In this edition increased precision was given to characteristic differences of form, complexion, hair, and stature, the circumstances under which they occur, and the causes by which they may be influenced. The descriptions of the numerous families of mankind were greatly multiplied, and at the same time given with greater minuteness. But it must be observed, that in a work of this kind the author's own personal observations must, even in the case of a great traveller, be comparatively limited; whilst the author who writes in his own fixed residence, though he enjoys the largest amount of collected materials, must nevertheless be subjected to the serious inconvenience of being supplied with statements which may be either seriously defective, or absolutely inaccurate, without his being able at the time to correct or even to detect them. Renewed research and the division of labour are indispensable for the completion of the task, in the progress of which there will be much to interest and reward the ethnologist who will take Dr. Prichard for his guide and instructor.

The diffusion of mankind presents one characteristic of the highest importance for its elucidation, which is altogether peculiar to our species. The characteristic to which I allude is that of *language*. It may be said, that in this respect it resembles many other characteristics resulting from the progressive cultivation of successive generations, which is the peculiar privilege of our race. Language, it is true, is subjected to the influence of this progressive cultivation, and preserves an important record of its advances. Yet there is, nevertheless, something peculiar in the subject of language, which places philology, as applied to the study of the human race generally, in a most exalted and important position amongst the abstruse sciences. I have only to appeal to the elaborate disquisitions of our learned associate, Dr. Latham, for the proof of this assertion.

But to return to Dr. Prichard. The philological portion of the subject, in the second edition of the work, was greatly enriched by a survey of the different relations of languages to each other; by the announcement of his discovery of the affi-

nity of the Celtic languages with Sanskrit and other members of the Indo-European family; and by a tabular view of the known families of man, with their localities and languages, arranged according to their geographical distribution.

The affinities of the Celtic languages formed the subject of a separate volume, which Dr. Prichard published in 1831.

To facilitate the appreciation of the value and importance, as well as of the difficulty of the discovery which it was the object of this work to exhibit, I may perhaps be allowed to offer a few brief remarks on the affinities of languages.

The degrees of affinity which may exist between languages are so very various, that it is absolutely necessary to define the meaning which it is intended to attach to the term *affinity*, as applied to languages. For want of a right understanding of this term, I have heard men, learned in many languages, seriously disagree as to the admission of such affinity. There are differences so slight as merely to affect the modification of words evidently the same. They scarcely affect the mutual intelligibility of the parties who use them. There is no dispute as to the identity of their language, and the differences are regarded as *dialectic*; but let parties meet each other with a somewhat greater difference of language, which prevents their interchange of ideas, and they will probably separate, each saying that the other speaks a different language. Such, for example, might be the case were a Frenchman to meet with a Spaniard or an Italian, provided both parties were uneducated men. Yet the philologist, whether he regard the grammatical structure, or the derivation of the most ordinary words, would not hesitate to pronounce that the two languages are very closely related; and most readily to admit that they, and a few other European languages, such as the Portuguese and the Provençal, are twigs of the same bough. If one of the parties had happened to be a German or an Englishman, there would have been the same mutual difficulty of comprehension; but the philologist would pronounce that the difference was more considerable; that instead of being twigs of the same bough, they might belong to boughs of the same branch. But besides discovering such a connection as would indicate this degree of community of origin, he would discover many words so far common to both, that they might be compared to the

artificial union which the horticulturist may effect between branches towards their extremities after they had forked off below. It is in relation to the connection of languages, as branches proceeding from a common arm of the same tree, that modern philologists have made such great and important discoveries. Amongst the most remarkable of those discoveries is that of the affinity demonstrated by Jules Klaproth and some other German Philologists, between the Sanscrit and some other dead and living Asiatic languages and the Greek, Latin, German, and other languages, boughs of the same branch. The Celtic dialects, the remnants of the most ancient and westerly of the European languages, had not been shewn to belong to the same principal branch or arm; and I believe that it was doubted if such connection existed, until our late President, by means of his extensive acquaintance with numerous languages, and by a sagacious as well as persevering investigation of characteristics exhibited by the mode in which the changes of words and syllables are brought about, was enabled to make evident a connection dependent on community of origin, which must have existed at a most remote period, anterior to tradition as well as to history.

When we consider that there are languages so distinct that they cannot be brought within that very distant affinity which has been proved to exist between the Celtic and the Sanscrit, but which may be assembled together in one common group, like that which comprehends the American languages, amounting to some hundreds in number, and spoken from the North Frozen Ocean as far South as Terra del Fuego, by numerous tribes resembling each other in physiognomy more closely than the inhabitants of different districts of Great Britain, some idea may be formed of the interest as well as of the magnitude of the subjects which engage the attention of an ethnologist who, like Dr. Prichard, applied himself to the study of the human race as a whole.

If the accession of words received from a language of the same stock may be compared to the operations of horticulturists who unite the branches of the same tree, or if they more nearly resemble the anastomoses of blood-vessels, there are instances in which languages receive isolated words from languages of the most distant and distinct groups, which may be

compared to the insertion of a graft from a totally different tree, or to the still more remote connection which exists between a parasitic plant and the tree to which it is attached. A familiar example of such introduction is furnished in our adoption of the word *taboo* from the South-Sea Islanders. Now, it is possible for many such additions to be made, and indeed they have actually taken place in the opposite direction, the Polynesian language being enriched by European words, without any evidence being afforded of affinity between these remote languages. Such accessions, however, become important ethnological characteristics, affording, it may be, the only records of the communications which have existed between distinct people. The history of the widely-spread Polynesian race seems to admit of some such elucidation, from the traces which have been left by such introduction of Asiatic words.

It will be readily understood, that, by a man of Dr. Prichard's learning and strong predilection for linguistic study, the philological element of Ethnology would be by no means underrated. In two able Reports, which he presented to the British Association for the Advancement of Science, he assigns to it its true and important place. In the Report of 1832 he successfully employed it as a corrective of classification founded on external characters only, which had led even the great and learned Cuvier to fall into palpable inaccuracies in his principal divisions of the human race.

In 1838 Dr. Prichard published an analysis of the Egyptian Mythology, which was a considerable extension of a former work which he had published on the same subject, with a critical examination of the remains of Egyptian chronology. This earlier treatise had arrested the attention of German antiquarians, and the distinguished Professor A. W. von Schlegel had published a translation of it, with a preliminary essay. I am indebted to our associate, D. W. Nash, a common friend of Dr. Prichard and myself, and who is also an Egyptian antiquarian, for the following notice of these works.

The discoveries of Dr. Young, founded upon the inscription of the Rosetta stone, and the labours of De Sacy and Akerblad, had awakened great interest in Egyptian research in the minds of the learned of Europe. The great work of the French Scientific Commission, chief product of Napoleon's Egyptian

expedition, had revealed the grandeur and extent of the remains of antiquity preserved in the valley of the Nile. The publication of M. Champollion's Letter to M. Dacier, in 1822, containing his hieroglyphic alphabet, gave promise that the obscurity which had so long enveloped the monuments of ancient Egypt would at length be dissipated. But, at the time when Dr. Prichard published his 'Analysis,' the interpretation of the Egyptian historical monuments was a matter of hope and expectation only. It was not until the following year (1824) that Champollion's important work, the '*Précis du Système Hiéroglyphique des Anciens Égyptiens*,' was presented to the public. The labours of Dr. Prichard were therefore unassisted by and wholly independent of those monumental records, which form the groundwork of recent Egyptian research.

But Dr. Prichard was no mere Egyptologer. He took his stand upon a higher and broader ground, and treated the subject of Egyptian history as a branch of general Ethnology,—a chapter in the great book of the universal history of mankind.

In his own words, in the Preface to the first edition of his 'Analysis,' in 1823, the motive which originally induced him "to enter on the inquiries contained in this work, was the desire to elucidate, through the mythology of the ancient Egyptians, the relations of that people to other branches of the human family." It had frequently been asserted, and, amongst others, by Champollion, that the Egyptians were a peculiarly African people, altogether distinct from the races of the Asiatic continent, and even wholly separate in origin from the rest of mankind.

It was particularly necessary for Dr. Prichard to examine into the groundwork and foundation of such an opinion, so entirely at variance with the views deduced by him from his ethnological researches. The method which he pursued in the investigation, in this particular work, was a comparison of the mythological and philosophic doctrines and civil institutions of the ancient Egyptians with those which were developed among the worshippers of Brahma in Eastern Asia. The language of ancient Egypt was so entirely unknown, that no assistance could be derived from that source; the only method, therefore, which could be followed with any prospect of success, was the kind of analysis and comparison entered on by Dr. Prichard.



The result of this analysis undoubtedly presents a remarkable series of striking points of resemblance, in mythic dogmas, religious ceremonies, sacerdotal customs, cosmogonic and physical doctrines, and even, to a certain extent, in civil institutions.

This treatise was translated into the German language at the wish of Professor Welcke, of Bonn, and a preface to it written by the learned archæologist, Augustus William von Schlegel. Professor Schlegel, while paying a just tribute to the learning and acuteness of the author, and to the profound character of the work in question, combats the general conclusion derived by Dr. Prichard from his comparison of Egypt with ancient India, in regard to the most important elements of their religion and political constitution. That general conclusion is, “that the same fundamental principles are to be traced as forming the groundwork of religious institutions, of philosophy, and of superstitious observances and ceremonies among the Egyptians and several Asiatic nations, more especially the Indians.” It would be out of place here to enter at length into the character of the evidences adduced by Dr. Prichard in support of this conclusion. The treatise itself presents an ample and methodical arrangement of the authorities on the subject of Egyptian mythology and philosophy, from the writings of Pagan and Christian authors. What remains of ancient literature and philosophy, bearing upon Egyptian history, has been copiously collected and carefully applied to the illustration of this obscure and intricate branch of the history of mankind. As in all other of Dr. Prichard’s writings, there is no straining of evidence to support a favourite hypothesis, but a careful statement of facts and circumstances, with a view to the elucidation of truth. The conclusion drawn from the remarkable coincidences and relations which Dr. Prichard pointed out as existing between Egyptian and Indian modes of thought, has received considerable support from a quarter the least expected. Recent investigations into the structure of the old Egyptian language, revealed to us by the successful interpretation of the hieroglyphic writing, have demonstrated an early original connection between the language of Egypt and the old Asiatic tongues. By this discovery, the Semitic barrier interposed between the Egyptian and the Asiatic races is broken down, and a community of origin established, which requires the hypothesis neither of the

immigration of sacerdotal Colonies, nor the doubtful navigation of the Erythræan sea. The profound views which led Dr. Prichard to assert, that, "although many obstacles present themselves to the supposition that direct intercourse subsisted between the Egyptians and the nations of Eastern Asia, there appear, even on very superficial comparison, so many phenomena of striking congruity in the intellectual and moral habits, and in the peculiar character of mental culture displayed by those nations, and particularly by the Egyptians, when compared with the ancient Indians, that it is extremely difficult to refer all these analogies to merely accidental coincidence," have thus been remarkably confirmed. His comparisons of individual personages of the mythologic system of either nation may not bear the test of measurement by the more extended knowledge of the subject which a quarter of a century has produced; but the terms of the general conclusions which are deduced from his 'Analysis' may be fairly taken to be past all dispute.

The 'Critical Examination of the Remains of Egyptian Chronology' is a remarkable monument of Dr. Prichard's sagacity, and of his aptitude for the elucidation of an obscure and intricate subject. The difficulty of the task which he here undertook he has not overrated, when, after laying before the reader the lists of Manetho and Eratosthenes, the old Chronicle, and the dynastic chronology of Herodotus and Diodorus, he says, "nothing can be more discouraging than the first survey of the fragments we have extracted. When I first examined these fragments, with a view of computing from them the Egyptian chronology, they appeared to me to be an inextricable tissue of error and contradiction. I repeated my attempt several times, at intervals, before I obtained the smallest hope of success, or a ray of light to guide me through the labyrinth. At length I thought I discovered a clue, which I have followed, and have persuaded myself that it has enabled me to unravel the mystery."

That clue was discovered by the same kind of investigatory process which has been applied in all Dr. Prichard's researches,—the obtaining fixed points of coincidence or agreement, with which to form a standard of comparison for apparently discordant materials.

Discordant as the several lists of the Egyptian Pharaohs

appeared, there were various points of agreement and correspondence between them, clearly demonstrating a derivation from some common source. The collation of the various lists, thus shewn to possess a certain authenticity, produced a series of historical synchronisms, which served as fixed points for computation in an upward and downward direction.

Rejecting the untenable doctrines of Marsham and Scaliger as to the contemporaneous character of the several dynasties of Manetho, and the division of Egypt into various districts and independent kingdoms, whose sovereigns appear in the lists in a false order of succession, Dr. Prichard commenced by treating the various historical fragments as authentic history, whose discrepancies were capable of being reconciled by the application of judicious critical comparison. Professor Schlegel imputes to him, as a fault inherent in an English author, a want of frankness and of freedom from prejudice, which causes him to incline, in his chronological views, "to the errors of the Harmonists, who, for the last 1500 years, have been vainly labouring to bring into seeming accordance the contradictions of the so-called profane history and of the traditions which are deemed sacred." How little this reproach, if it be one, was deserved, is evident, not only from the general tenor of the investigation pursued, but from the author's own statement of the rule by which he was guided in his research. "Various attempts," says Dr. Prichard (*Critical Exam.*, p. 89), "have been made to reconcile the chronology of Manetho with that of Moses. Perizonius allows the Egyptian annalist to be correct through the latter half of the chronicle; but not knowing what to do with the first fifteen dynasties, he boldly erases them at once, and declares them to be a forgery of the author. He has been followed by several later authors, particularly by Dr. Hales. This way of proceeding is more like cutting the Gordian knot than untying it. We have no right to act in so summary a manner. If we cannot reconcile the antiquity assumed by the annals of one nation with the dates assigned for the origin of empires and of the world in the records of the others, we have no other course to pursue than to acknowledge the contradiction between them. We may have good reasons for placing confidence in one record rather than another; but we have no right to cut off from the archives of Egypt all that extends too

far, as if we were shortening the limbs of Procrustes, and then pretend that we have reconciled them with the computation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

“But though we ought to abstain from new modelling the Egyptian antiquities after the pattern of the Hebrew, no objection can be made to our comparing all the documents we possess that relate to the chronology of Egypt, and endeavouring to find some method of reconciling them with themselves. We are only bound, while proceeding in this attempt, to exclude all prejudice in favour of those particular methods that lead to conclusions which we are from other considerations inclined to adopt.”

These are undoubtedly the sentiments of genuine historical criticism.

The view taken by Dr. Prichard, founded on the internal evidences of the documents themselves, as to the relative characters of the lists of Manetho and Eratosthenes, is in its leading features, and especially as relates to the earlier period of the Egyptian chronology, fully borne out and confirmed by later experience.

The conclusion deduced from a comparison of the lists, that the third, fourth, and sixth of Manetho contain a succession coeval with that of the first twenty-two sovereigns of the Latenculus of Eratosthenes, is very nearly the same with that arrived at by the Chevalier Bunsen, aided by an examination of original and all but complete monumental and documentary chronological records of Egypt. Bunsen makes the first twenty-two sovereigns of Eratosthenes correspond to the first, third, fourth and sixth dynasties of Manetho, rejecting from the list of Manetho the second and fifth dynasties, as had been done by Dr. Prichard.

That in other points the chronological comparisons instituted by Dr. Prichard should not have been confirmed by subsequent discoveries, is by no means extraordinary. Unaided by the evidence derived from the monuments, the analysis of Egyptian chronology, immediately subsequent to the Hyksos domination, is far more difficult and more intricate than for the preceding period. To the conquering monarchs of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties are ascribed the myths and traditions which belong of right to the heroes of a remoter age; and an in-

vestigation, based of necessity solely on a comparison of names and fragmentary historical notices of individual sovereigns, is involved in an endless maze of conflicting testimony. Professor Schlegel has truly observed of this treatise, that the learned industry and the intelligence of the procedure of its author are worthy of all commendation ; and it may be safely affirmed, that its production at a period when the chronology of Egypt was almost a blank in history, is an enduring testimony to the critical acumen and profound sagacity, no less than to the extensive learning, of its author.

Dr. Prichard's singularly retiring manners kept him much aloof from public affairs ; yet, when occasion required it, he could exert himself with successful zeal. He felt personally interested in the importance of placing the means of a liberal education within the ready access of the youth of Bristol ; and with the co-operation of several gentlemen in his neighbourhood, amongst whom may be mentioned his particular friends Eden, Tothill, and Conybeare, he established the Bristol College, and he had the satisfaction of seeing one of his own sons amongst the first who acquired distinction under its professors.

Dr. Prichard's interest in the varieties of the human race was not limited to making their physical characters, their languages, their manners, and often obscure history, the objects of scientific or learned research. He felt the interest of a philanthropist and a Christian in the protection and amelioration of the weak and oppressed branches of the human family. He hailed the formation of the Aborigines' Protection Society, and was one of its early advocates. Though his residence at Bristol did not allow him to take an active part in the Society, his name was on the first list of its honorary members ; and I may be allowed to quote the following passage from his pen, which was printed in one of the earliest of the Society's publications :—

“ I much regret that circumstances over which I have no controul will prevent me from attending the Anniversary Meeting of the Society for the Protection of the Aborigines. I hardly need say to you that there is no undertaking of this comparatively enlightened, and, as I trust it may be called, Christian age, which appears to me calculated to excite a deeper and more lively interest than this truly admi-

“rable attempt to preserve from utter ruin and extermination  
“many whole tribes and families of men, who, without such  
“interference, are doomed to be swept away from the face of  
“the earth. Certainly there is no undertaking of the present  
“time that has a stronger claim on humanity, and even on the  
“justice of enlightened men. For what a stigma will be  
“placed on Christian and civilized nations when it shall ap-  
“pear, that, by a selfish pursuit of their own advantage, they  
“have destroyed and rooted out so many families and nations  
“of their fellow-creatures, and this, if not by actually murder-  
“ing them,—which indeed appears to be even now a practice  
“very frequently pursued,—by depriving them of the means of  
“subsistence, and by tempting them to poison and ruin them-  
“selves. For such a work, when it shall have been accom-  
“plished, the only excuse or extenuation will be, just what  
“the first murderer made for the slaughter of his brother; and  
“we might almost be tempted to suppose that the narrative  
“was designed to be typical of the time when Christianized  
“Europeans shall have left on the earth no living relic of the  
“numerous races who now inhabit distant regions, but who  
“will soon find their allotted doom if we proceed on the  
“method of conduct thus far pursued, from the time of Pizarro  
“and Cortez to that of our English Colonists of South Africa.  
“But independently of the claim of humanity and justice which  
“this admirable undertaking presents, there are numerous  
“points of view in which it is particularly interesting to the  
“philosopher and to men devoted to the pursuit of science.  
“How many problems of the most curious and interesting  
“kind will have been left unsolved if the various races of man-  
“kind become diminished in number, and when the diversified  
“tribes of America, Australia, and many parts of Asia, shall  
“have ceased to exist! At present we are but very imper-  
“fectly acquainted with the physiological character of many of  
“these races, and the opportunity of obtaining a more accurate  
“and satisfactory knowledge will have been for ever taken  
“away. The physical history of mankind, certainly a most  
“interesting branch of human knowledge, will have been left  
“for ever imperfect, and but half explored.”

I know that Dr. Prichard had the Aborigines' Protection Society in view in giving an important paper on the extinction

of races to the British Association for the Advancement of Science at its Meeting in Birmingham in 1838.

On accepting the office of Inspector of the Lunatic Asylums, Dr. Prichard relinquished private practice, resigned his post as Physician to the Infirmary, which he had held for more than twenty-six years, and transferred his residence from Bristol to London. To this change our Society is indebted for the privilege which we have enjoyed of having the greatest of ethnologists as our President. He succeeded our first President, Sir Charles Malcolm, to whose able exertions at its origin, and during the progress of its formation, the Ethnological Society of London is incalculably indebted.

After his settlement in London, Dr. Prichard completed the third edition of his work, which, we know, is extended to five closely-printed volumes, forming a mass of learned and scientific research and laborious compilation far superior to any thing which had been previously produced on Ethnology, and scarcely surpassed in the literature of any other science.

In this Edition Dr. Prichard introduced the distinctive appellations of *Stenobregmate* and *Platybregmate*, as characteristics of different forms of skull; and he subsequently gave directions for the different aspects in which skulls are to be viewed for the purpose of noticing ethnological points. A somewhat analogous service has been performed by the distinguished Professor Retzius of Stockholm, who, having devoted special attention to this part of Ethnology, has classified nations according to the prevalent forms of their heads, and employed the distinctive terms, *Dolico-cephalic* and *Brachy-cephalic*, each of which are again divided into *Prognate* and *Orthognate*.

Having myself paid some attention to the ethnological grouping of human skulls, I must confess that I have found very considerable difficulty in adopting points of characteristic difference, and in this very difficulty I find an argument in favour of the unity of our species, and of the differences which we observe being those of variety only. I cannot adduce a better illustration of this remark than that which is afforded by the skulls and portraits of American Indians. The unmixed Indians of North and South America form as well marked and

distinct a group of the human race as can be pointed out; and I have noticed greater differences in the form of the head between individuals of the same tribe, than between those of individuals of different tribes, separated from each other by thousands of miles, and between which the most remote connection cannot be traced.

Having already noticed the principal divisions of the subject in speaking of the Doctor's previous writings, I will not now trespass on the time of the Society with any further observations on this third Edition. Whilst the publication of this great work was in progress, Dr. Prichard produced a smaller one on the same subject, which appeared in illustrated numbers, designed to encourage and popularize the study of Ethnology by consulting the taste of the day. On the completion of the larger work, Dr. Prichard observed that he considered his literary labours as accomplished; yet we cannot doubt, that, had his life and health been spared, his ever active mind and confirmed habits of study and labour would have continued to gratify and instruct us by further productions of his well-stored mind; in fact the subject of my last conversation with him, as we walked together from the last meeting of this Society at which he presided, was the publication of a collection of plates of human skulls, illustrative of Ethnology, somewhat on the plan of the '*Crania Americana*' of my friend Dr. Morton, of Philadelphia.

It cannot fail to be a matter of surprise and wonder, when the nature of the Doctor's private practice, and the character of his official duties, which called him much from home, are considered, how he was able to accomplish so much. I have been informed that he not only had acquired the rare and invaluable habit of saving and occupying those detached fragments of time which it is most difficult not to lose, but that he also possessed the remarkable faculty of being able at once to resume and proceed with his compositions at the point at which he had left them.

Dr. Prichard appeared to be in possession of his usual health till within a few weeks of his death; yet it is probable that the unusual dampness of the latter part of the last year, to which may be ascribed the remarkably low and atonic characters of almost every case of illness, had produced a latent



influence on his system, and prepared it to yield to the exciting causes which were applied.

He had left his home, and was engaged in one of his official tours, when he was seized with a severe feverish attack while visiting the Lunatic Asylums in the neighbourhood of Salisbury, on the 4th of December 1848, and was confined in that city until the 17th, when he was conveyed to his own house in London. The fever proved to be of a rheumatic and gouty character, baffling all the efforts of medical skill, and terminating his life, after much suffering, by pericarditis (inflammation of the membrane containing the heart) and extensive suppuration in the knee-joint. His death took place at ten o'clock on the night of the 22d of 12th month (December).

It is scarcely necessary that I should say any thing respecting the personal appearance of our late friend and President, which must be indelibly impressed on the minds of the members of the Ethnological Society; but for the sake of gentlemen who may not have had the privilege of being acquainted with him, I may be allowed to quote the following graphic description, which was penned about ten years since by my friend Professor Gibson, of Philadelphia, when on a visit to this country.

“Dr. Prichard is about fifty years of age, is a short, compact, close-made man, with bluish-gray eyes, large and prominent features, and expression uncommonly mild, open, and benevolent; so much so, that almost any one would naturally inquire who he was. His hair is thin and scattering, whereas, in former days, it was light chesnut, and so remarkably thick, bushy, and upright, as to form one of his striking characteristics. In dress he is simple, and unostentatious. He is very cheerful, sociable, frank, easy, and unpretending in his discourse and manners, and has so much modesty, artlessness, and child-like simplicity about him, that no one would be prepared to say, upon slight acquaintance, that he was any thing more than an ordinary, sensible, well-disposed man, however much they might be pleased, which they would not fail to be, with his benign and agreeable countenance. But it is impossible to be in his company long, and to hear him talk on any subject, without being strongly impressed with the depth and originality of his views, his sterling good sense and wisdom, his profound and varied information, his

clear and luminous conceptions, his ardent and unbounded love of science, his extreme liberality towards every nation under the sun, his entire freedom from envy or jealousy of any description, and from professional rivalry and bitterness, his singleness of purpose, his goodness of heart, and his reverence for all the duties that belong to a Christian, an accountable being, and a man."

As a practitioner of medicine, Dr. Prichard was remarkable for decision on the character of disease, and for a promptness and energy in the application of remedies. Many have been the instances where, in extreme cases, the boldness of his practice was followed by unexpectedly happy results. In his intercourse with professional brethren and colleagues, his conduct was straightforward, honourable, and generous: to his patients he was gentle, attentive, and kind.

High moral and religious principle, an affectionate disposition, an instinctive sentiment of delicacy, propriety, and consideration of the feelings of others, and a retiring modesty and simplicity of deportment, as much distinguished and endeared him in the domestic and social relations of life, as his literary and scientific attainments elevated him to the eminence he held in public estimation; he furnished, indeed, a bright example of the scholar, the gentleman, and the Christian.

Dr. Prichard's great attainments and learned and important works justly acquired universal reputation, and the honours and distinctions of Literary and Scientific Societies were poured in upon him. When he attended the meeting of the Provincial Medical Association at Oxford the University conferred upon him the Doctor's degree. The National Institute of France elected him a Corresponding Member,\* and he received the same distinction from the Academy of Medicine and Statistical Society there, from the Academy of Natural Sciences of Phil-

\* I cannot deny myself the pleasure of stating a fact in relation to the Doctor's election to the distinguished honour of Corresponding Member of the Institute of France. Whilst paying a visit to Paris, in conversing with one of my friends who was a member of the Institute, he talked of nominating some English associate, and proposed one or two names, which led me to suggest that of Dr. Prichard. It was highly approved by my friend, who consequently brought it before his colleagues, and the Doctor was elected accordingly.

adelphia, the American Philosophical Society, the Oriental Society of America, the Ethnological Society of New York, the Scientific Academy of Sienna, and from other bodies. He was likewise Fellow of the Royal Society, and Member of the Royal Irish Academy, and of the Royal Geographical Society.

However gratifying it must have been to Dr. Prichard to receive these proofs of respect and esteem from the learned men of his own and other countries, they were only the fruitless rewards which intellectual merit is wont to receive. The Home Government of our country was not insensible of his great merits, and doubtless considered that it was conferring something more than empty honour in appointing him to the arduous and responsible office of Commissioner of Lunacy, with a well-earned salary of 1500*l.* a year. It is far from my object to censure the Government upon an appointment which gratified the Doctor, whilst it did credit to their selection, and secured the performance of an important service on terms which the strictest economy would approve; but I would nevertheless invite attentive consideration to the contrast which may be drawn between this reward bestowed on intellectual merit and that which is awarded to military achievements. The reward of the man of learning and knowledge consists in giving him the opportunity of deriving a moderate emolument from continued exertion and exposure to fatigue and danger—a danger which, in the case of our late honoured President, was doubtless fatal. For had not duty required him to travel during an inclement season, you would probably be now receiving instruction from his own lips, instead of listening to this imperfect sketch of his shortened life from your associate, in lamenting the irreparable loss which we have sustained.